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Make a list of the great issues facing the American people today:

The war in Viet Nam. Crime and violence in our cities.

Inflation, Civil Rights --

Stop there. Civil rights is automatically on every list of issues, and it is automatically the subject of campaign oratory in every election year.

But let us think the unthinkable for a moment. Let us consider the possibility that civil rights is no longer an issue. Perhaps "civil rights" is an empty phantom issue, discussed as if it were a topic of the present but is really a subject of the past.

Consider the possibility that the vocabulary of the civil rights movement is the rhetoric of the rearview mirror. Segregation, Jim Crow, with all deliberate speed, sit-ins, freedom rides---these words, which aroused such passion a few short years ago, have lost their relevance as they won their goals. These are words that tell it like it used to be.

The Negro has won his right to vote. He has won his right to equality in education. Segregation is no longer legal, and open housing is here now. These battles are won.

But the Negro in America is more deeply troubled today than a generation ago, when civil rights was a distant dream. We have seen that a little freedom is a dangerous thing; the danger disappears only in the fullness of freedom.

The American Negro's problems today are not his problems of yesterday. But the fact is that we are dealing with today's problems with yesterday's answers.

Civil Rights is not today's issue. The laws that denied those rights have been replaced by laws that guarantee those rights.

But when the shackles have been struck off a man's wrist, there is a time before circulation returns to his fingers. The freedom is there, but the ability to make use of that freedom is not---and there is the root cause of frustration.

That frustration breeds counter-frustration. White people say: What's wrong with them? Don't they realize they have made more progress in one short decade than in the past century? Why aren't they satisfied?

Some well-intentioned men stop into this crossfire and say, "We haven't done enough. We have to pass more laws. We have to give Negroes more rights."

But these men miss the point of today's problems. Surely there are loopholes in the laws that remain, and these will be closed soon enough, but legislation is no longer the answer.

Other well-intentioned men say "Money is the answer. More welfare payments, more direct or indirect handouts, much more of what we did in the past is the answer."

But these men are living back in the days of "civil rights." They are trapped by the language and the responses of a bygone era.

Long ago, when "the movement" meant the labor movement, labor statesman Samuel Gompers was asked what he wanted for the American workingman. He replied in one word: "More."

And that is the response of the worried whites who think they can buy their way out of the dilemma: More.

More laws. More money. The same answers, but much more of the same. And the only argument is between those who want a little more of the same and those who want a lot more of the same.

I suggest that a policy of "more of the same" will only result in more of the same frustration, more of the same rioting, more of the same despair.

This is because the problem we face today is not "more of the same problem" we found yesterday. We face a new set of circumstances: Yesterday's solutions brought about that wonderful, dangerous "little bit of freedom". The frustration bred by that freedom is what poses the new challenge.

What good is the right to live in a community if you can't afford the price of the house? What good is the right to send your children to any university if you can't meet the tuition costs? What ^{good} is the right to vote for either of two different

candidates if neither of them understands your needs? Of what earthly satisfaction is it to know that you are not being turned down for a job because of your color---only because of your lack of training? At long last, the Negro has his bill of rights---but he cannot pay the bill.

When you deny a man rights, the result is hopelessness. When you give him the rights he deserves, the result is hope; but when that hope is then crushed, the result is frustration and bitterness.

The American Negro today has not been given half a loaf; he has been given the shining hope of a full loaf, which is held cruelly just out of reach. The agony of America is not the pain of repression---it is the pain of transition, growing pains, labor pains. This is not the pain of decay; on the contrary, this is the ache of muscles never before exercised, new freedom demanding new dignity.

We must recognize today's agony for what it really is: the gap between freedom and dignity, between promise and fulfillment. One set of answers brought about the freedom and the promise; a completely different set of answers will bring about the dignity and the fulfillment.

That is why we must reject the shallow counseling of "more of the same." The old formula won't work on the new equation. Originality and creativity are needed now, to engage that new need with new imagination.

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Forget civil rights, forget the legal landmarks, the glorious abstractions. That's done. Think now about dignity. Think now about Negro pride. Think now about a man standing tall in his community, in his family, in his own eyes. Think now about that extra-legal right to self-respect.

One surface indication of that need for dignity has been in the use of the word "black." A brilliant cartoonist put it this way: "As a matter of racial pride we want to be called 'blacks.' Which has replaced Afro-Americans---which replaced Negroes---which replaced colored people---which replaced darkies---which replaced blacks."

As you see, the use of the word has come full circle, as Negroes have regained pride in being Negroes. The word is used now as an affirmation of identity, as in "black power" and "black pride." The late Martin Luther King emphasized this to his followers when he constantly reminded them "black is beautiful."

This development is in the traditional American pattern. Every minority group first sought to assimilate, to become similar to the majority of other Americans; as they later gained confidence in their acceptance, they then proudly asserted their national and religious origins. In the case of the Negro, the difference is this: Because their acceptance was so long repressed and denied, when it finally came the pride did not grow, it exploded.

The need for dignity and respect grows out of the fight for civil rights, but it is profoundly different. Only if we grasp this new need and understand it deeply, can we hope to meet it. I have said before that America cannot meet the needs of the sixties with the solutions of the thirties. But when it comes to the Negro community, the difference is more acute: We cannot meet the needs of the late sixties with the solutions of the early sixties.

How then do we come up with a new approach to meet the new Negro needs of today?

We start by casting aside the shibboleths of civil rights and the rhetoric of the past. Uncle Tom is dead. So is Simon Legree and so is Jim Crow. The cry for freedom is giving way to a cry for dignity.

We start by opening our minds to ways of solving the problems of poverty, and of inequality of opportunity, that do not demean the human spirit. We must come up with ways that lift people out of poverty without making them permanent wards of the state; we must feed the spirit as well as the body.

Here is the direction our thinking should be taking. I do not know if these are the answers, but I do know that these are steps in the right direction. We should consider them, refine them, replace those which don't work with others that will, but constantly search for solutions to the long-term need for dignity as we answer the other needs for education, training and health care.

For example, we should consider a national family allowance for every American---not singling out any group, but a cash payment to every family depending on the number of children in the family. To families in high brackets, this will largely be returned to the government in taxes; to families on the poverty line and below it, it will provide for basic necessities. But it will not be a humiliating handout, demanding that a man prove his need before receiving anything. This approach has worked in other countries. (CHECK)

For another example, we must enlist free enterprise---on a massive scale---in the cause of retraining the unemployed and the underemployed. This has been said often enough, but the jawbone technique won't work. Tax credits must be given companies that invest funds in training the unemployed; on top of that incentive, a stimulus is called for: On companies that get government contracts, proof of the utilization of these tax credits should be required. If a company wants the benefit of government business, it should be willing to help the government get people off welfare rolls and onto payrolls.

Today, the armed services discharge servicemen with separation pay. Why should we not institute a system of separation training, preparation for civilian jobs by an army or navy that has an obligation to return better-equipped Americans to the work force? In this connection, a returning servicemen's job placement

center should be set up to see to it that a veteran can get a better job as he gets out than when he when he was inducted. (LIST OTHERS).

This is the new direction I am talking about. Not all these ideas are brand-new; some have been discussed by members of both parties for years. But the direction, the thrust, is indeed new. It is a far cry from "more of the same."

The new direction aims at helping people help themselves, and turns away from forcing people into the role of chronic social and cultural invalids. The new direction aims at meeting the physical needs of human beings, and simultaneously answering the demand for human dignity.

When you speak with the leaders of the Negro community, you hear a new word today, a new concept. That word is "soul." It is a mysterious word with complex and profound meanings. On one level, "to have soul" means to be identified with the Negro cause; during some riots, Negro merchants wrote "soul brother" on their windows to try and discourage looters.

In a deeper sense, "soul" means an inner regard for truth, a rejection of phoniness or ostentation. "Soul music" touches the deepest chords of response; though it is hard to articulate, every Negro knows that only a man with soul is a leader they can trust.

The men with soul today are the men---black and white---
who understand the need for dignity and respect.

In times that try men's souls, these are the men---black
and white---who will lead our nation into an era of peace, justice
and dignity.